



Park Flight and Migratory Bird Conservation



The Wilson's Warbler is a migratory bird species shared between North Cascades National Park (left) and Mombacho Volcano Natural Area in Nicaragua (right), both *Park Flight* project sites.

"Hemispheric solidarity is new among statesmen, but not among the feathered navies of the sky."

--Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*

The U.S. National Park System provides habitat critical to many species of migratory birds, from raptors and shorebirds to songbirds. Continental and local declines in these bird populations have led to a concern for their future. Because these species use parks on a seasonal basis, their protection cannot be assured without conservation efforts occurring in the habitats critical to the birds use throughout the year. This requires cooperative and coordinated efforts between the United States and Latin America, such as the *Park Flight Program*, to protect breeding, migration, and wintering habitats, as well as a proactive approach to migratory bird conservation within the National Park Service (NPS).

The *Park Flight Program* works to protect shared migratory bird species and their habitats in both U.S. and Mesoamerican (Mexico and Central America) national parks and protected areas through developing bird conservation and education projects and creating opportunities for technical exchange and cooperation. *Park Flight* is a partnership between NPS, the National Park Foundation, the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), and the U.S. Agency for International Development. The program is made possible through the generous support of American Airlines and the NPS Natural Resource Challenge. Technical direction is provided through the University of Arizona Desert Southwest Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit and NPS Biological Resource Management Division.

The assistance provided to U.S. National Parks and Mesoamerican parks and protected areas will be integrated and projects will focus on two areas relating to migratory birds: 1) species assessment, protection, and management; and 2) park interpretation, environmental education, and outreach. Another component will be technical assistance, including training workshops, personnel exchanges, and participation of Central American professionals in U.S. National Parks through the NPS Office of International Affairs Volunteer in Parks Program.

The NPS migratory bird conservation efforts will include involvement in Partners in Flight activities, such as International Migratory Bird Day, and coordination with the North American Bird Conservation Initiative and other national and international bird conservation initiatives. The program will focus on migratory bird conservation efforts in U.S. National Parks, and enhance collaboration with other governmental agencies on migratory bird conservation efforts, provide information regarding compliance with migratory bird legislation, and participate in bird conservation partnerships.

The *Park Flight Program* is the recipient of the NPS Director's Award as part of the 2002 National Park Partnership Awards and has generated more than \$1.3 million towards the conservation of migratory birds.

U.S. *Park Flight* Projects

Partners in Protection: A Cooperative Approach to Conserving Migratory Birds

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

Promote Conservation and Education of Neotropical Migratory Birds

North Cascades National Park Service Complex

Assess Neotropical Birds and Provide Educational Field Trips to Five Parks

Bandelier National Monument, Pecos National Historical Park, Aztec Ruins National Monument, Capulin Volcano National Monument, Fort Union National Monument

Preserving Oases Along the Flyway: Critical Stopover Habitat in New Jersey for Migrating Songbirds

New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route

Managing Park Forests for Viable Songbird Populations

Cuyahoga Valley National Park

Conduct an Assessment of Golden-winged Warblers at Purchase Knob and Provide Public Education

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Conservation of Neotropical Migratory Birds in Riparian Habitat

Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Point Reyes National Seashore



NPS and NFWF provide technical assistance to biologists and park guards for a bird monitoring training in Honduras.



Salvadora Morales, a *Park Flight* intern from Nicaragua, leads a migratory bird interpretive walk in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.

Mesoamerican *Park Flight* Projects

Birds, Cloud Forest and Coffee Plantations: Environmental Interpretation in Mombacho Volcano Natural Area

Nicaragua

Capacity Building for Neotropical Bird Conservation in Guatemala

Cerro San Gil Protected Area, Guatemala

Environmental Education for Bird Conservation in El Imposible and Montecristo National Parks

El Salvador

Training of Honduran Biologists and Park Guards in Field Techniques for Bird Conservation

Honduras

Bird Education and Outreach at Ajusco Medio

Mexico

Community-based Conservation of Panama's Birds

Panama



Panamanian children participate in an environmental education activity on bird conservation.

For more information on the *Park Flight Program* and NPS Migratory Bird Conservation Program, contact the Biological Resource Management Division at the Natural Resource Program Center, 970/225-3592.